

PROPOSED USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS TO SUPPRESS THE
SPECIFIC NAME *TRIGONALIS* R. ETHERIDGE JUN., 1876, AS
PUBLISHED IN THE BINOMEN *MYALINA ? TRIGONALIS* (CLASS
PELECYPODA). Z.N.(S.) 1446

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In 1876, R. Etheridge jun. (*Ann. Mag. nat. Hist.* (4) 18 : 103, pl. 4, fig. 8) described and figured a new species of fossil pelecypod from the Calciferous Sandstone Series (Lower Carboniferous) of Cockburnspath, Scotland. He named his species *Myalina ? trigonalis*, and in his discussion said that he was uncertain to which of three genera the species ought to be referred. His figure shows a small and incomplete internal mould, and in the absence of the type-specimen the species cannot be reliably identified.

2. Two years later (1878, *Quart. J. geol. Soc. London* 34 : 12, pl. 1, figs. 12–14) Etheridge described and figured *Anthracoptera ? obesa*, also from the Calciferous Sandstone Series. The generic name *Anthracoptera* Salter, 1863, is a junior subjective synonym of *Naiadites* Dawson, 1860, and the binomen *Naiadites obesus* (R. Etheridge, jun.) has been in constant use since 1895 for the species described by Etheridge in 1878. This species occurs in abundance at several horizons in the Calciferous Sandstone Series of Scotland, and from this fact the name is recorded in general works dealing with the geology of the area and is familiar to students and others besides professional palaeontologists. It has been repeatedly figured and described since its first publication, e.g. by W. Hind (1895, Monograph of *Carbonicola*, *Anthracomya* and *Naiadites* (*Palaeont. Soc.*) : 144–7, pl. 19, figs. 8–11, 15, 16); D. Leitch (1942, *Trans. Geol. Soc. Glasgow* 20 : 208–15, pl. 3, figs. l–o, q and text-fig. 5); A. E. Trueman and J. Weir (1956, Monograph of British Carboniferous non-marine Lamellibranchia (*Palaeont. Soc.*) : 261–5, pl. 31, figs. 14–29, 43). On the other hand, Etheridge's earlier specific name *trigonalis* is not even mentioned by any of these authors, and it has never been used after the first mention.

3. There are two reasons why *Myalina ? trigonalis* R. Etheridge jun., 1876, has not been used. The first is that the illustration is poor and does not correspond to any other named fossil species. The second is that the type-specimen was unknown, so that there was no accessible standard of reference whereby the meaning of the name could be ascertained. Recently, however, two syntypes (apparently constituting the whole of the original type-series) have been discovered in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh. Dr. J. Weir (University of Glasgow, Scotland) agrees with me that these specimens, insofar as they are determinable, are two young or dwarfed specimens of *Naiadites obesus* in a poor state of preservation. It is therefore now for the first time clear that the species widely known for over 60 years as *Naiadites obesus*, and so named in a number of specialist works as well as in publications of general interest, ought under the Rules to be called *Naiadites trigonalis*. This change in a well-established name would not only be objectionable for

its own sake, but would also be liable to produce confusion between *Naiadites trigonalis* from the Scottish Lower Carboniferous and *Naiadites triangularis* (J. de C. Sowerby) from the Upper Carboniferous Coal Measures of England and Scotland.

4. There is one further point of interest in this species. *Naiadites* is essentially a non-marine genus of the generally marine family MYALINIDAE, which is abundantly represented in British Lower Carboniferous marine strata. *Naiadites obesus*, which displays the diagnostic external and internal characters of the genus, is the oldest known member of the genus. It is thus plausibly held to demonstrate one possible source for the evolution of the economically important Upper Carboniferous non-marine pelecypods from their marine relatives and predecessors in the Lower Carboniferous.

5. For the reasons set out above, I now ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature :

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *trigonalis* R. Etheridge, jun., 1876, as published in the binomen *Myalina* ? *trigonalis*, for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy ;
- (2) to place the above specific name, as suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) above, on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology ;
- (3) to place the specific name *obesa* R. Etheridge, jun., 1878, as published in the binomen *Anthracoptera* ? *obesa*, on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

25 SEP 1960

PURCHASED

